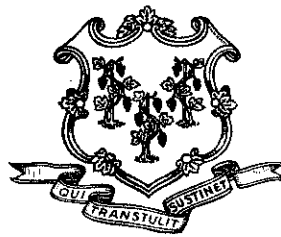


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Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and Members of the Public Health Committee. I would like to offer my support for H.B. 5535 An Act Concerning Notice Of A Patient's Observation Status And Notice Concerning The Qualifications Of Those Who Provide Health Care And Counseling Services. This bill would require hospitals to provide patients with notice of placement in observation status and require providers of health care and counseling services to provide notice of their qualifications and a description of the services provided. Patients left on observation status can find themselves in disadvantageous situations with insurers that have different (often less generous) coverage for in-patient vs out-patient procedures. The issue of observation status can be especially difficult for Medicare patients as some patients who require nursing home care and have spent time in the hospital on observation status have had nursing home transfers rejected by Medicare because they have not fulfilled the required pre-nursing home hospital stay. Notice of being on observation status would be quite helpful to these patients. Thank you for hearing this important legislation.